

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated October 4, 2007. Although the Office Action Summary page refers to claims "1-12", only claims 1-9 are pending in this application. It is noted that the present application is the U.S. national phase of international application PCT/JP03/10568, which was filed on August 21, 2003.

Claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2003-138165 in view of JP 08-034860. Office Action, pages 2-3. Claims 7-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 2003-138165 in view of JP 08-034860, US 6,617,033, US 6,180,043, and EP 0 934 808. Office Action, pages 3-4. The primary reference, which is a necessary part of all of the rejections of record – that is, JP 2003-138165 – was published on May 14, 2003, which is prior to the filing date of the underlying PCT application. However, the present application claims priority to a Japanese application that was filed prior to that date, on August 23, 2002. Applicants provide herewith an accurate translation into the English language of a certified copy of JP 2002-244160 (which was filed on August 23, 2002). Applicants respectfully submit that this antedates the May 14, 2003 publication date of the primary reference. Accordingly, all rejections of record based on the primary reference should be withdrawn.

All rejections of record being overcome by this response, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to Issue. Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Richard

Gallagher (Reg. No. 28,781) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: January 4, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

By 
Marc S. Weiner

Registration No.: 32,181
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Rd
Suite 100 East
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant